

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
IN AND FOR POLK COUNTY, FLORIDA

JAMIE ANN NAUGHRIGHT,
Plaintiff,

vs.

Case No. 53-2002CA-00 2228-0000-00

PEYTON MANNING, ARCHIE
MANNING, JOHN WARREN
UNDERWOOD, PEYDIRT, INC. and
HARPERCOLLINS PUBLISHERS,
INC.

Defendants.

VERIFIED COMPLAINT

Plaintiff, Jamie Ann Naughtright, files this Verified Complaint against Defendants Peyton Manning, Archie Manning, John Warren Underwood, Peydirt, Inc., and HarperCollins Publishers, Inc. and states:

JURISDICTION & VENUE

1. This is an action for defamation and for damages in an amount in excess of Fifteen Thousand Dollars, exclusive of interest and costs.

2. Plaintiff, Jamie Ann Naughtright, ("Dr. Naughtright"), formerly known as Jamie Whited, is a resident of Lakeland, Polk County, Florida.

3. Defendant Peyton Manning ("Peyton Manning"), according to the book *Manning* subsequently referred to herein, divides his time between New Orleans, Indianapolis, and East Tennessee. Defendant

Peyton Manning has subjected himself to the jurisdiction of the courts of the State of Florida by committing the tort of defamation within the State of Florida. Additionally, Defendant Peyton Manning has subjected himself to the jurisdiction of the courts of the State of Florida by routinely and on a regular basis performing his professional activities within the State of Florida.

4. Defendant Archie Manning, according to the book *Manning*, is a resident of New Orleans, Louisiana. Defendant Archie Manning has subjected himself to the jurisdiction of the courts of the State of Florida by committing the tort of defamation within the State of Florida.

5. Defendant, John Warren Underwood ("Underwood"), is a resident of Miami, Dade County, Florida. As a resident of the State of Florida, Defendant Underwood is subject to the jurisdiction of the courts of the State of Florida. Additionally, Defendant Underwood has subjected himself to the jurisdiction of the courts of the State of Florida by committing the tort of defamation within the State of Florida. Further, Plaintiff Naughtright has reason to believe, and therefore alleges, that portions of the book *Manning* were written by Defendant Underwood within the State of Florida.

6. Defendant, Peydirt, Inc. ("Peydirt"), is a foreign corporation holding, along with Peyton Manning, Archie Manning, and Underwood, the copyright to the book *Manning*. Plaintiff Naughtright has reason to believe and therefore alleges that

Defendant Peyton Manning is an owner of Peydirt, does business through Peydirt, and controls the operations of Peydirt. Defendant Peydirt has subjected itself to the jurisdiction of the courts of the State of Florida by committing the tort of defamation within the State of Florida. Plaintiff Naughtright has reason to believe and therefore alleges that Defendant Peydirt has also subjected itself to the jurisdiction of the courts of the State of Florida by authorizing, through collaboration and publication agreements, its copyrighted material, including copyrighted defamatory statements about Plaintiff Naughtright, to be sold and distributed within the State of Florida in the ordinary course of commerce, trade, and use. As an entity owned and/or controlled by Defendant Peyton Manning, Peyton Manning's knowledge is imputed to Peydirt and therefore Peydirt knew that said copyrighted statements were false and that the publication of these copyrighted statements would cause damage to Plaintiff Naughtright.

7. Defendant HarperCollins Publishers, Inc. ("HarperCollins") is a foreign corporation doing business in Polk County, Florida. Defendant HarperCollins has subjected itself to the jurisdiction of the courts of the State of Florida by committing the tort of defamation within the State of Florida. Defendant HarperCollins has also subjected itself to the jurisdiction of the courts of the State of Florida by delivering books, including a book containing defamatory statements about Plaintiff Naughtright, for sale within the State of Florida in the ordinary course of commerce, trade, and use.

FACTS

8. Plaintiff Naughtright earned a B.S. degree in 1991 from the University of Tennessee, with a major in Exercise Physiology and a minor in Coaching. Thereafter, in 1992, Plaintiff Naughtright earned a Masters degree in Health Education and Promotion at the University of Tennessee. Plaintiff Naughtright obtained these degrees in anticipation of pursuing a career in sports medicine.

9. From 1995 to 1998 Naughtright was Director of Health and Wellness in the Men's Athletic's Department at the University of Tennessee.

10. From 1996 to 1998, Naughtright was employed by the University of Tennessee as Associate Athletic Trainer in the Men's Athletics Department, and as Head Track and Field Trainer, and Associate Football Trainer. During this period of employment, Naughtright also worked towards her doctorate degree in Health Education, which she received from the University of Tennessee in 1996. Her doctoral dissertation at the University of Tennessee was *Assessing the [REDACTED] Knowledge, Attitudes, and Behaviors of Representative Football Student-Athletes in the Southeastern Conference.*

11. Dr. Naughtright's professional career has also included the following:

- a. Head Athletic Trainer for the USA Track and Field USA vs. Canada International Games and for the Beijing, China International Women's Ekiden Games.

b. Medical Director of the 1995 NCAA Track and Field Division I Championships.

c. Olympic Training Staff (Track and Field) for USA Trials and 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games.

12. From 1998 until January, 2002, when her position became untenable because of the publication of *Manning*, Dr. Naughtright was Program Director of the Athletic Training Educational Program and on the full time faculty as an Assistant Professor at Florida Southern College, a well respected and noted Christian Liberal Arts College located in Lakeland, Florida.

THE DEFAMATORY REMARKS

13. Shortly prior to September, 2000, Defendant Peyton Manning, a former college football player at the University of Tennessee during the years 1994 to 1998, authored a book titled *Manning*. *Manning* was co-authored by Defendants Archie Manning, Peyton Manning's father who was also a former college and professional football player, and Defendant Underwood. *Manning* was copyrighted in 2000 by Defendant Peydirt. The hardcover version of *Manning* was published in September, 2000 and distributed for sale by Defendant HarperCollins throughout the United States, including numerous locations in and around Lakeland, Polk County, Florida. The paperback version of *Manning* was published in August, 2001 and disseminated by Defendant HarperCollins Publishers, Inc. throughout the United States, including numerous locations in Lakeland, Polk County, Florida.

14. Among the numerous locations in Lakeland, Polk County, Florida, selling *Manning* was Books-A-Million, 3629 South Florida Avenue, Lakeland, Florida. Said location was only 2 ½ miles from Dr. Naughtright's place of employment at Florida Southern College.

15. Defendants knew that the book *Manning* would be published, placed for sale, and distributed in Polk County, Florida and undertook said dissemination for pecuniary gain. Defendant HarperCollins' dissemination and sale of the book *Manning* in Polk County, Florida, was part of the corporation's usual and ordinary business and was not casual nor occasional nor was it an isolated transaction.

16. Contained within *Manning* were numerous defamatory statements pertaining to Naughtright. These statements included the following:

- a. "The way it happened, Tennessee had hired a female trainer [Dr. Naughtright], and never mind that women in the men's locker room is one of the most misbegotten concessions to equal rights ever made. When Dad [Archie Manning] played, there was still at least a tacit acknowledgment that women and men are two different sexes, with all that implies, and a certain amount of decorum had to be maintained. Meaning when it came to training rooms and shower stalls, the opposite sex was not allowed. Common sense tells you why.

I admit that even in the context of "modern" life, what I did to offend this trainer was inappropriate. Not exactly a criminal offense, but out of line. I certainly didn't dislike her. **I thought she had a vulgar mouth,** but I always tried to be nice. A couple times I went out of my way to help her, once giving a talk to a group at her invitation, another time when I was at the University of Virginia visiting Ashley and she was there with some young athletes who needed to be escorted to a party. I agreed to do it for her.

Then one day I was in the training room and a track athlete I knew made some off-color remark that I felt deserved a colorful (i.e., Cooper-like) response. I turned my back in the athlete's direction and dropped the seat of my pants. Cooper would have applauded, whether the trainer saw it or not. He'd been mooning people since he was twelve years old-out the back of buses, out car windows, wherever he felt the urge. He's the mooning champion of the world.

But I did it thinking the trainer wasn't where she would see. (Cooper would have done it so she *could* see.) Even when she did, it seemed like something she'd have laughed at, considering the environment, or shrugged off as harmless. Crude, maybe, but harmless. But as luck would have it, this particular trainer had been accumulating a list of complaints against the university that she intended to take action on - alleged sexist acts that, when her lawyer finally put it together, resulted in a lawsuit charging thirty-five counts of sexual harassment. In the end, the university settled with her for a good bit of money. My "involvement" made headlines. [Pgs. 272-273 of hardcover version; Pgs.282-283 of paperback version - **Emphasis Added**]

- b. At Tennessee, Peyton was implicated in a harassment suit when he mooned (showed his backside to) a woman athletic trainer in the training room, but that proved mostly exaggeration. He was aiming at somebody else, and so was the trainer. She was suing the university over job grievances. [Pg. 8 of hardcover and paperback version - **Emphasis Added**]

Copies of the above-quoted portions of the book *Manning* are attached to this Complaint as Composite Exhibit 1.

17. The first comment set forth above which constitutes defamation concerns Defendant Peyton Manning's statement that he thought Dr. Naughtright had a **vulgar mouth**. This statement is false. Dr. Naughtright does not have a vulgar mouth. Vulgar is a

word describing someone who is crudely indecent. To state that Dr. Naughtright has a **vulgar mouth** conveys to the reader that Dr. Naughtright regularly uses obscenities and profanities of the grossest nature. The use of the phrase **vulgar mouth** in referring to Dr. Naughtright conveys that her speech is filthy, hard-core, repulsive, scatological, smutty, sordid, lascivious, and nasty. To use such a word in relation to an assistant professor at Florida Southern College, a well respected United Methodist Christian Liberal Arts College, constitutes defamation and is calculated to injure and damage her reputation and employability in her chosen profession which, by its nature, involves interaction with impressionable young students and athletes.

18. Moreover, this statement by Defendant Peyton Manning implies the existence of some other undisclosed facts concerning the use of vulgarities by Dr. Naughtright. Defendant Peyton Manning implies that a concealed or undisclosed set of defamatory facts would confirm his opinion. Thus, his statement that he **thought she had a vulgar mouth**, implies the allegation of undisclosed defamatory facts as the basis for the opinion, and as such, constitutes defamation under Florida law. Said statement is actionable per se in that it tends to subject Dr. Naughtright to distrust, contempt, and ridicule, and is calculated to injure her in her professional and personal life.

19. The remaining quotations pertaining to the "mooning" incident and the alleged "law suit" falsely portray Dr. Naughtright

as an overly sensitive, predatory woman looking for incidents to bolster a law suit against her employer. Such portrayal is extremely damaging to her career in sports medicine in that it conveys that Dr. Naughtright is unsuitable for employment in her chosen field. Any future employer who accepts the Defendants' false portrayal of Dr. Naughtright as one who would be offended by such a relatively harmless action, would not even consider interviewing her for a position or hiring her for fear of being sued by her at the slightest provocation. The Defendants' false version portrays Dr. Naughtright as being too sensitive to hold any sports medicine position wherein she is required to interact with athletes or teach others how to interact with athletes and as such, is actionable per se, in that Defendant's false version tends to subject Dr. Naughtright to distrust, contempt, disgrace, odium, and ridicule, and suggests that she is unsuitable for employment in her chosen field.

20. As Defendant Peyton Manning knows and as his co-Defendants know, his statement that Dr. Naughtright over-reacted to what he attempts to characterize as an innocent "mooning" incident is false. In truth, Peyton Manning did not merely "moon" another athlete without knowledge that Dr. Naughtright would witness this juvenile but relatively harmless event. Rather, his action was solely directed at Dr. Naughtright, and was not merely "mooning", but was of such an egregious nature as to be beyond the pale.

21. In truth and fact, Peyton Manning's actual conduct was of such a gross, crude, and indecent nature that it would have

offended even the most callous individual. For Peyton Manning to state that Dr. Naughtright should have laughed at or shrugged off his conduct as harmless fun is ludicrous, considering that his conduct was not mere "mooning" but constituted an act not only filthy in nature but which would be offensive to any reasonable individual. As Defendant Peyton Manning knows and as his co-Defendants know, his actions were not harmless but were of a nature so bizarre and gross as to cause any reasonable person severe mental and emotional harm.

22. Peyton Manning's statement that his conduct was only perceived as improper because Dr. Naughtright was contemplating a lawsuit is also totally false and defamatory. As Peyton Manning and the other Defendants know, no lawsuit was ever filed by Dr. Naughtright against any person or institution.

23. Defendant Peyton Manning's false, misleading, incomplete, and self-serving characterization of the incident as a mere prank performed without knowledge that it would be witnessed by Dr. Naughtright, and that even if she did see it she should have laughed it off, is false and defamatory to Dr. Naughtright. Defendants' further statement that Dr. Naughtright filed a lawsuit against her former employer, the University of Tennessee, is false and defamatory and has damaged her employability with subsequent employers and future employers. Critical information necessary for the reader to make an informed determination on the conclusions offered by the authors, Peyton Manning, Archie Manning, and Underwood, are either omitted or intentionally twisted. False,

misleading, and incomplete information is used to create the appearance that the "incident" occurred in a way other than that which in fact is known by the Defendants.

24. In sum, the statements regarding the "mooning" incident and the "law suit" contain the following falsehoods:

- a. The incident was not a mere "mooning" as described in *Manning* but was an act far more serious.
- b. The statement that Peyton Manning "did it" thinking that Dr. Naughtright was not where she could see it is false in that his conduct was directed solely at Dr. Naughtright and involved knowing and intentional interaction between Peyton Manning and Dr. Naughtright, that any person would recognize as offensive.
- c. The statement that Dr. Naughtright should have shrugged the conduct off as harmless is ludicrous in that Peyton Manning knows and the other Defendants know that his conduct was not harmless but was of a nature which would not have been tolerated by any reasonable individual.
- d. Dr. Naughtright had not "been accumulating a list of complaints against the university she intended to take action on."
- e. Dr. Naughtright did not file a harassment lawsuit or a lawsuit of any kind against any person or entity.
- f. Dr. Naughtright's complaint concerning Peyton Manning's conduct did not prove to be "mostly exaggeration."

25. Contrary to the way in which she is portrayed by the Defendants, Dr. Naughtright is not an overly sensitive female who is nothing more than a law suit looking for a place to happen. During her career at the University of Tennessee, she held positions which required her to deal with athletes who were convicted felons, convicted domestic abusers, sex offenders, accused rapists and sodomites. Dr. Naughtright was required to work with individuals who were at times violent, and during her employment she was physically threatened with a deadly weapon. She has counseled athletes charged with domestic violence, worked with athletes' probation officers, and worked with athletes addicted to alcohol and illegal drugs, including cocaine. She has dealt with issues of academic fraud, corruption, and improprieties at the highest level of athletic administration, including exploitation of athletes by alumni for sexual favors, attempted suicides, credit card fraud and drug testing manipulation. For Defendants to portray her as a overly sensitive female, not suited to the profession of sports medicine at the college and professional level, is defamation of the highest order.

26. A fair reading of the excerpts from *Manning* casts Dr. Naughtright's good name and reputation in a false light, subjects her to ridicule, and otherwise defames and demeans her professional competence. Said excerpts from *Manning* are false and defamatory and were published without reasonable care as to their truth or falsity. Said excerpts are actionable per se in that the statements impute to Dr. Naughtright conduct, characteristics, and

conditions incompatible with her profession. Even though Defendants did not identify Dr. Naughtright by name in *Manning*, her identity was readily ascertainable within her profession and to many others based on the statements and descriptions contained in *Manning*.

27. Defendant Peyton Manning's actions are made all the more egregious by the fact that he was not content to leave the incident in the past. Shortly after the incident in 1996, Defendant Peyton Manning, in a crude attempt at humor, stated that "I'm glad it's all behind me, no pun intended." Yet, almost six (6) years later, after Dr. Naughtright is employed in another state, Peyton Manning and the other Defendants resurrect the incident and write a book in which facts are distorted to cast Dr. Naughtright in a bad light, with the result that her career has been irreparably damaged.

28. Defendants Archie Manning, Underwood, and HarperCollins could easily have ascertained that Defendant Peyton Manning's version of the incident was false, misleading, and incomplete. Even a cursory pre-publication investigation by Defendants Archie Manning, Underwood, and HarperCollins could have ascertained the existence of a significant body of credible information contradicting Peyton Manning's revisionist version of the incident. For example, these Defendants would have found that Peyton Manning's prior accounts of the incident were inconsistent with each other.

29. Had the Defendants acted in accordance with accepted standards of journalistic behavior, a pre-publication investigation

would have included at a minimum disclosure to Dr. Naughtright of Peyton Manning's present version of the "incident" for her comment and/or rebuttal. Had these Defendants discharged their obligations, Dr. Naughtright would have been provided with notice and with an opportunity to protect herself from damage by offering a statement for consideration by Defendant HarperCollins, or at least allowing her an opportunity to demonstrate that Peyton Manning's account as to be reported in the book *Manning* was false. Instead these Defendants elected to proceed to publication in purposeful ignorance of exactly what Peyton Manning did to Dr. Naughtright.

30. In August of 2001, the Defendants were notified of the falsity of the depiction of Dr. Naughtright and events concerning her in the book *Manning*, and of the damages being suffered by Dr. Naughtright as a result of the defamatory publication. Thereafter, Defendants proceeded to publish *Manning* in a paperback version which repeats the offending passages, despite having been placed on notice of their falsity.

DAMAGES

31. After publication of *Manning* and the dissemination of the book, both nationally, and in the Lakeland, Polk County, area, a photo copy of the excerpts from *Manning* referred to in paragraph 16 (a) above, was mailed, on or about the first week in May, 2001, in a Florida Southern College envelope addressed to "Dr. Vulgar Mouth Whited, Athletic Training, Florida Southern College, 111 Lake

Hollingsworth Drive, Lakeland, Fl. 33801." The envelope, a copy of which is attached hereto as Plaintiff's Exhibit 2, was received by the Florida Southern College mail room. The mail room contacted Dr. Naughtright's supervisor, who obtained the letter from the mail room, opened it, and read the contents which were the excerpts from *Manning*. She then re-sealed the letter and placed it in the box on Dr. Naughtright's door which is used for students, faculty, and administration to leave communications and other documents directed to Dr. Naughtright. Inasmuch as Dr. Naughtright was out of the country at this time, the envelope remained in her box for several days until she found it upon her return. She then learned for the first time that the Defendants had written and published a book containing their false and defamatory version of the 1996 events at the University of Tennessee.

32. For the 2 ½ years prior to the time the letter was received at Florida Southern College in May of 2001, Dr. Naughtright had no significant employment problems or issues whatsoever. However, after the letter was received at Florida Southern College, it became common knowledge on campus that Dr. Naughtright was the athletic trainer referred to by the Defendants in *Manning*. Thereafter, Dr. Naughtright was treated differently by both students and colleagues and her employment situation at Florida Southern College became untenable, which ultimately resulted in her leaving the employment of Florida Southern College. Dr. Naughtright's loss of her position at Florida Southern College was a direct result of the false and damaging statements made in *Manning*.

33. As an example of the manner in which the false and defamatory statements were construed by those within Dr. Naughtright's profession, upon publication and dissemination of *Manning*, a student reported to Dr. Naughtright that a professor in a classroom lecture stated that Dr. Naughtright would never again work in sports medicine and that her career had been ruined. The apparent truth of this statement concerning Dr. Naughtright's career is found in the fact that Dr. Naughtright has recently applied for two positions for which she is eminently qualified and has received either no response to these applications or has not been granted an interview. Since the publication of *Manning*, Dr. Naughtright's employability has descended to zero.

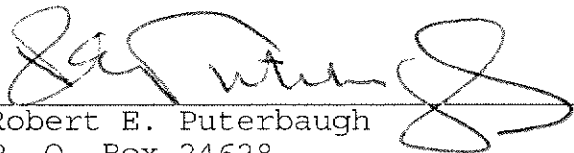
34. As a result of the acts as set forth above, Dr. Naughtright has suffered compensatory damages in an amount in excess of Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000.00), which include, but are not necessarily limited to, lost wages to date, lost future wages, the value of lost employment benefits to date, the value of lost future employment benefits, irreparable damage to her reputation, irreparable damage to her employability in her profession, and emotional distress and trauma.

35. The statements made by Defendants in *Manning*, as set forth above, were made with malice and were made in order to portray Defendant Peyton Manning in a favorable light at the expense of Dr. Naughtright and were made with negligent and reckless disregard of the consequences of their statements as to

the effect they would have on Dr. Naughtright's career. Defendants knew, or should have known, that the natural and proximate consequences of the publication would cause injury to Dr. Naughtright in her personal, social, and professional life. Additionally, Defendant Peyton Manning made the statements with the specific intent of hurting Dr. Naughtright based on his dislike for Dr. Naughtright which resulted from the punishment meted out to him by the University of Tennessee as a result of the 1996 "mooning incident". As a result of these malicious acts, Dr. Naughtright is entitled to punitive damages from the Defendants in an amount in excess of Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000.00).

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff Jamie Ann Naughtright requests trial by jury and joint and several judgment for compensatory damages and pre-judgment interest against Defendants Peyton Manning, Archie Manning, John Warren Underwood, Peydirt, Inc., and HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., and joint and several judgement for punitive damages against said Defendants after entitlement to such damages is established by the Court.

PETERSON & MYERS, P.A.



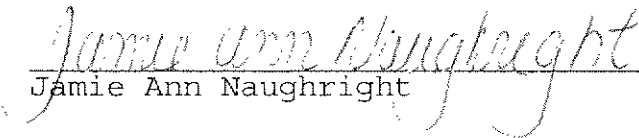
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VERIFICATION

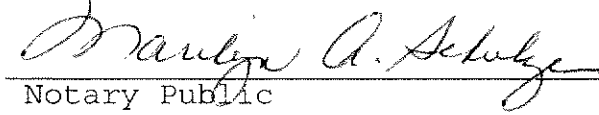
I, Jamie Ann Naughtright, affirm that I have personal knowledge of the facts stated in this Verified Complaint, and that the allegations stated herein are true and correct to the best of my personal knowledge.



Jamie Ann Naughtright

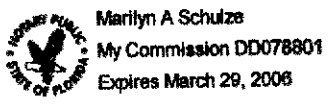
STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF POLK

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this 29th day of May, 2002, by Jamie Ann Naughtright who is personally known to me or has produced FLORIDA DRIVERS LICENSE as identification and who did ~~(did not)~~ take an oath.



Notary Public

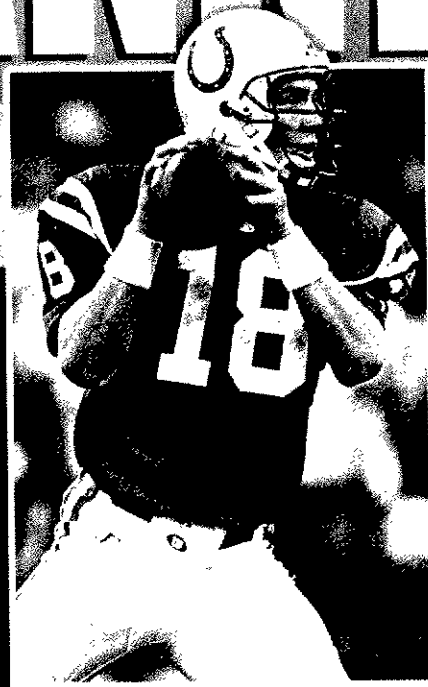
(SEAL)



**A FATHER,
HIS SONS,
AND A
FOOTBALL
LEGACY**



MANNING



ARCHIE AND PEYTON MANNING
WITH JOHN UNDERWOOD

All photographs courtesy of the Manning family.

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I'm believed or not doesn't matter. If nothing else in life, I want to be true to the things I believe in, and quite simply, to what I'm all about. I know I'd better, because it seems whenever I take a false step or two I feel the consequences. Like with the "mooning" incident that made such a stir in Knoxville before my junior year. Cooper would have sailed through it unscathed. Not me.

The way it happened, Tennessee had hired a female trainer, and never mind that women in the men's locker room is one of the most misbegotten concessions to equal rights ever made. When Dad played, there was still at least a tacit acknowledgment that women and men are two different sexes, with all that implies, and a certain amount of decorum had to be maintained. Meaning when it came to training rooms and shower stalls, the opposite sex was not allowed. Common sense tells you why.

I admit that even in the context of "modern" life, what I did to offend this trainer was inappropriate. Not exactly a criminal offense, but out of line. I certainly didn't dislike her. I thought she had a vulgar mouth, but I always tried to be nice. A couple times I went out of my way to help her, once giving a talk to a group at her invitation, another time when I was at the University of Virginia visiting Ashley and she was there with some young athletes who needed to be escorted to a party. I agreed to do it for her.

Then one day I was in the training room and a track athlete I knew made some off-color remark that I felt deserved a colorful (i.e., Cooper-like) response. I turned my back in the athlete's direction and dropped the seat of my pants. Cooper would have applauded, whether the trainer saw it or not. He'd been mooning people since he was twelve years old—out the back of buses, out car windows, wherever he felt the urge. He's the mooning champion of the world.

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It’s all past history now, of course, but it hurt me. Probably much more than it should have. I’d have to say that in such cases it’s easier being Cooper.

So with the four years at Tennessee over and all the facts in, how would I advise other players who come to that juncture before their senior seasons with a chance to make a lot of money if they turn pro early? Not because I did it, but I think even the NFL would prefer there be a rule (one that would stand up legally) that players *have* to finish their four years—develop to the max as athletes, but get their degrees as well, because too many leave early now and go bust in the pros, shorting out both ways.

And you have to know colleges would prefer that everybody play through their eligibility, because it’s so disruptive to the team when players are counted on and bolt. It’s costly for the university, too, having spent all that money recruiting and educating them. You could also argue that when a kid leaves early, ninety-nine times out of a hundred he’ll never get that degree that could matter so much to him if he doesn’t make it in the pros. Which the vast majority don’t.

The flip side is that there are kids in the system who simply can’t afford to stay. And a lot more now who don’t intend to. And when the money gets piled under their noses, they really have no choice. It’s a different world from when Dad played. The colleges now serve as one big farm system for the pro leagues, and a lot of hotshot athletes use it just that way, never really appreciating college life, never concentrating on their education (except enough to stay eligible). The dollars make the difference.

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At Tennessee, Peyton was implicated in a harassment suit when he mooned (showed his backside to) a woman athletic trainer in the training room, but that proved mostly exaggeration. He was aiming at somebody else, and so was the trainer. She was suing the university over job grievances. Archie was philosophical about it. "I knew he wouldn't have done it deliberately, because that's not Peyton's style," he said. "Now, if they'd told me it was Cooper . . ." Well, of course, Cooper. On a bet he allegedly lost, the irrepressible Cooper Manning once streaked (ran *au naturel*) down sorority row at the Mississippi campus. On a school day. At high noon. His concession to decorum was a telephone call to Archie's answering machine just before he took off "to let me know where he could be reached in case he got arrested."

And young Eli, the quiet one, *did* get arrested, briefly, at Ole Miss in February of his freshman year. For "public drunkenness" . . . outside the Sigma Nu house . . . during initiation week. He and another freshman player were being inducted into Archie's old fraternity, and the celebration quite literally spilled onto the lawn. A campus cop drove by at just the wrong moment. Eli called Archie early the next morning and gave him a play-by-play of the extenuating circumstances, including his being doused with alcohol by his new fraternity buddies ("honest, Dad, I wasn't drunk"), but Archie told him to cool it and take his medicine, which included a fine and, from the Ole Miss football coach, a curfew for the rest of the semester. "He got off cheap," said Archie. "It was a good lesson." At the time, Peyton was in Honolulu for the Pro Bowl, and when a television camera caught him on the sidelines during the game he lifted a cup of Gatorade toward the lens, winked, and said prescriptively, "Eli?" When Cooper heard about the incident, he was said to have only smiled.

Archie Manning has eased into middle age now. His eyes are latticed with laugh lines, well earned, and when he is hard into a subject his eyebrows lift to give him a look of luminous contentment, as though he has figured out some


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ARE THE BEST
FATHER-AND-SON
QUARTERBACK
COMBINATION
IN THE
HISTORY OF
FOOTBALL..."**

Sports Illustrated

MANNING


ARCHIE AND PEYTON MANNING
WITH JOHN UNDERWOOD

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that this book is stolen property. It was reported as "unsold and
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To my mother, Sis, who was the most
courageous and caring person I know.
And, of course, to my dear Olivia, the
"Great Equalizer," a fantastic mother,
and an all-pro wife.

—Archie Manning

what I'm all about. I know I'd better, because it seems whenever I take a false step or two I feel the consequences. Like with the "mooning" incident that made such a stir in Knoxville before my junior year. Cooper would have sailed through it unscathed. Not me.

The way it happened, Tennessee had hired a female trainer, and never mind that women in the men's locker room is one of the most misbegotten concessions to equal rights ever made. When Dad played, there was still at least a tacit acknowledgment that women and men are two different sexes, with all that implies, and a certain amount of decorum had to be maintained. Meaning when it came to training rooms and shower stalls, the opposite sex was not allowed. Common sense tells you why.

I admit that even in the context of "modern" life, what I did to offend this trainer was inappropriate. Not exactly a criminal offense, but out of line. I certainly didn't dislike her. I thought she had a vulgar mouth, but I always tried to be nice. A couple times I went out of my way to help her, once giving a talk to a group at her invitation, another time when I was at the University of Virginia visiting Ashley and she was there with some young athletes who needed to be escorted to a party. I agreed to do it for her.

Then one day I was in the training room and a track athlete I knew made some off-color remark that I felt deserved a colorful (i.e., Cooper-like) response. I turned my back in the athlete's direction and dropped the seat of my pants. Cooper would have applauded, whether the trainer saw it or not. He'd been mooning people since he was twelve years old—out the back of buses, out car windows, wherever he felt the urge. He's the mooning champion of the world.

But I did it thinking the trainer wasn't where she would see. (Cooper would have done it so she *could* see.) Even when she did, it seemed like something she'd have laughed at, considering the environment, or shrugged off as harmless. Crude, maybe, but harmless. But as luck would have it, this particular trainer had been accumulating a list of com-

plaints against the university that she intended to take action on—alleged sexist acts that, when her lawyer finally put it together, resulted in a lawsuit charging thirty-five counts of sexual harassment. In the end, the university settled with her for a good bit of money. My "involvement" made headlines.

It's all past history now, of course, but it hurt me. Probably much more than it should have. I'd have to say that in such cases it's easier being Cooper.

So with the four years at Tennessee over and all the facts in, how would I advise other players who come to that juncture before their senior seasons with a chance to make a lot of money if they turn pro early? Not because I did it, but I think even the NFL would prefer there be a rule (one that would stand up legally) that players *have* to finish their four years—develop to the max as athletes, but get their degrees as well, because too many leave early now and go bust in the pros, shorting out both ways.

And you have to know colleges would prefer that everybody play through their eligibility, because it's so disruptive to the team when players are counted on and bolt. It's costly for the university, too, having spent all that money recruiting and educating them. You could also argue that when a kid leaves early, ninety-nine times out of a hundred he'll never get that degree that could matter so much to him if he doesn't make it in the pros. Which the vast majority don't.

The flip side is that there are kids in the system who simply can't afford to stay. And a lot more now who don't intend to. And when the money gets piled under their noses, they really have no choice. It's a different world from when Dad played. The colleges now serve as one big farm system for the pro leagues, and a lot of hotshot athletes use it just that way, never really appreciating college life, never concentrating on their education (except enough to stay eligible). The dollars make the difference.

So maybe it's time to end the pretense, on both sides.



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EXHIBIT "2"

I'm believed or not doesn't matter. If nothing else in life, I want to be true to the things I believe in, and quite simply, to what I'm all about. I know I'd better because it seems whenever I make a false step or two I feel the consequences. Like with the "mooning" incident that made such a stir in Knoxville before my junior year. Cooper would have sailed through it unscathed. Not me.

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