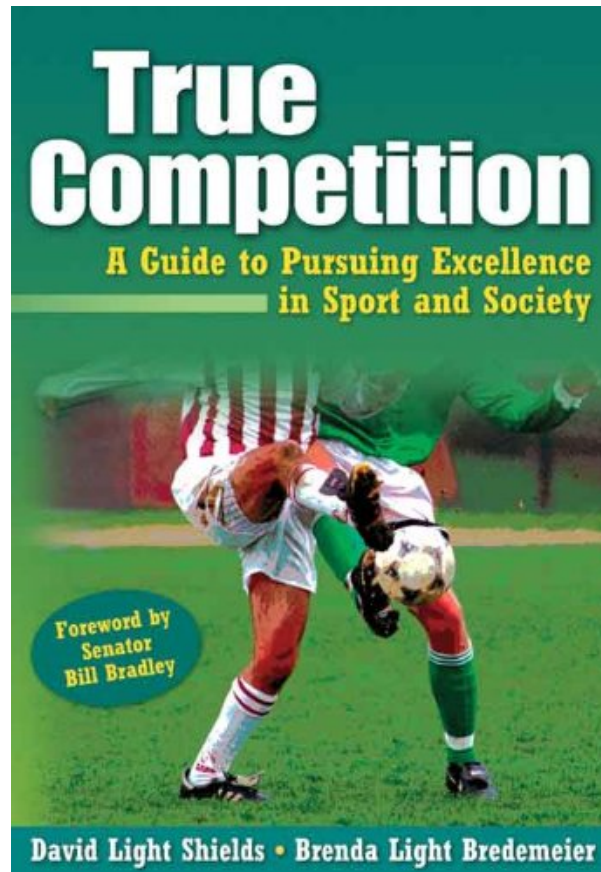
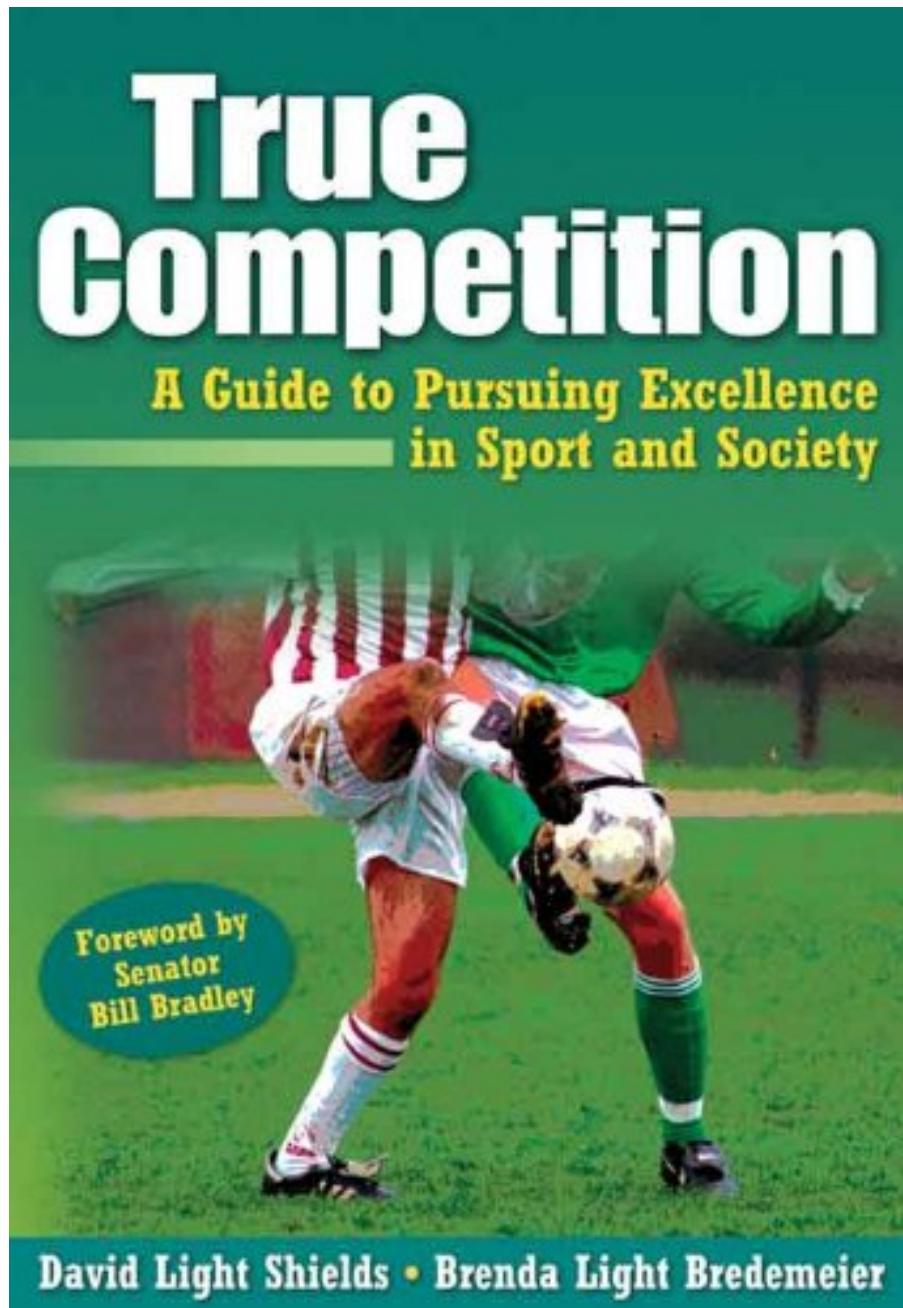


TRUE COMPETITION BY DAVID LIGHT SHIELDS, BRENDA LIGHT BREDEMEIER



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Review

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Terry Orlick, PhD

“Brilliant! True Competition has once and for all destroyed the popular notion that nice guys (or girls) finish last. In this insightful and practical book, the authors demonstrate how ethics propel excellence. It belongs on every coach's bookshelf. More importantly, it belongs in their hearts and minds.”

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True Competition: A Guide to Pursuing Excellence in Sport and Society offers a blueprint for maximizing the potential of competition to foster excellence and enjoyment. It provides a novel perspective on competition that challenges traditional beliefs through a research-backed defense that—up until now—has been lacking. With this text, readers will learn the differences between positive and negative competition, and they will discover how to implement change in their organizations, teams, and individual practices.

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Most helpful customer reviews

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

A must-read if you work in sports or education!

By Grace K. Hogan

According to David Shields and Brenda Bredemeier, contest situations, whether on the playing field or in the classroom, can lead to two different processes. With guidance, a contest is an opportunity for people to strive together- on opposing sides- to achieve excellence. Your opponent is your partner, bringing their best effort in order to push you to new levels of greatness. However, all too often, contests are filled with "decompetition" (coined by the authors), a process in which opponents strive against each other, and the focus changes to defeating your 'enemy' rather than working to become a better athlete (or student, politician, etc). "True Competition" starts by discussing the common misidentification of decompetition as competition, and then elaborates on the differences between true competition and its ugly twin. Included in the book is a field guide, providing signs for coaches and parents that indicate the presence of either competition or decompetition, as well as tips for encouraging competition, a section on character's link to competition and cooperation, and in-depth discussion of the components of true competition and decompetition. This book will be valuable to anyone who works in sports, deals with children, runs a business, or engages in the political arena. We all encounter contests every day, and only by understanding the differences and causes of competition and its sinister counterpart can we begin to work towards "true competition", a process shown to increase productivity, motivation, and character. Yes, it is difficult to suddenly think of competition in a new light, and harder still to accept the addition of yet another word to explain something we thought we understood. But once your brain adjusts you will find that, like Malcolm Gladwell's "The Tipping Point", "True Competition" makes you view the world in a new way, and reexamine ideas you thought you understood.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Why We Should Play to Win: A "must read" for coaches, trainers, athletes and parents

By K. Martin

Coaches berating officials for seemingly bad calls, parents cursing at coaches, other parents or even their own kids, and the athletes themselves caught cheating, committing acts of violence during games and using performance-enhancing drugs during contests. Is this what winning is all about? Is competition a good thing?

For anyone involved in sports coaching, training, officiating or educating, especially parents of youth athletes, this book is an essential guide to understanding the nature and power of true competition.

Gleaned from years of research and study in the field of competition and character development, the book answers those questions and defines the positive side of competition as it relates to striving for excellence during athletic performances and introduces a new term, decompetition, that explores the characteristics of negative behaviors and attitudes associated with competition that we read about so often in the news.

Authors David Light Shields and Brenda Light Bredemeier present ground-breaking research that defines the elements of true competition as it relates to primarily sports contests but also as it exists in other areas of society such as academics and the business world while debunking the current view that competition is a "bad" thing.

The book is well-structured and easily read starting with the early chapters that are devoted to briefly defining competition and decompetition as we commonly associate the terms to sports contests. Real-life scenarios are used to illustrate the important concepts that are discussed in the book and a useful field guide section helps to identify the differences in positive competition versus decompetition while later chapters expand on the practical applications of the concepts and research presented in the book that can be used by coaches, trainers, parents and athletes to use true competition to strive for excellence in performance.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Refutes "competition is bad" argument

By Bobby Newman

True Competition is simply the best book on the subject of competition I have ever read. Too often, all we hear is a one-sided discussion of the downsides of competition. That framework often starts off with the assumption that competition is based on a "win at all costs" philosophy. True Competition gives the counter-argument. Competition, when rules of sportsmanship are appreciated, is actually cooperation. We are competing, but we are also cooperating in a self-improvement enterprise where we pit our skills and training against one another in an effort to help each other improve. I believe it was Ryan Hall who once said something to the effect that thirty or forty thousand people run big city marathons. There is one male and one female winner declared. Did all the others lose? If you can appreciate that concept, if you can appreciate how honorable striving can help us all to help each other improve, you will truly appreciate True Competition. I would also recommend PR Smith's books on Sportsmanship and the Sport and Character (Clifford and Feezell) as additional reading.

See all 6 customer reviews...

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