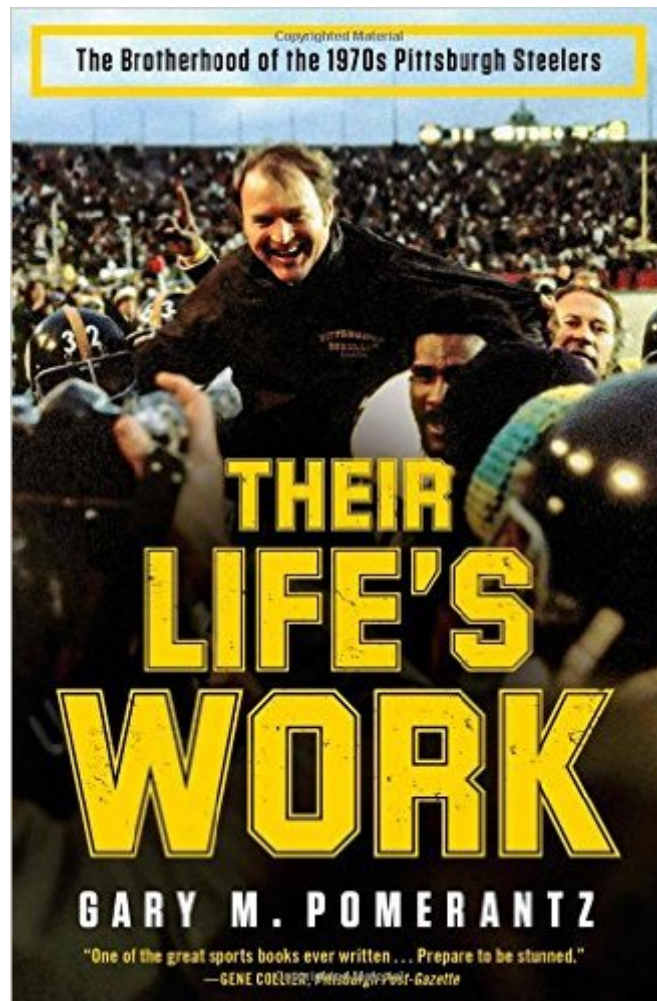


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Their Life's Work: The Brotherhood Of The 1970s Pittsburgh Steelers



Synopsis

• (Scott Brown, >): A unique literary sports book thatâ€™ through exquisite reportage, love, and honestyâ€™ tells the full story of the best team to ever play the game. The Pittsburgh Steelers of the 1970s won an unprecedented and unmatched four Super Bowls in six years. A dozen of those Steelers players, coaches, and executives have been inducted into the Hall of Fame, and three decades later their names echo in popular memory: Meanâ€™ Joe Greene, Terry Bradshaw, Franco Harris, Mike Webster, Jack Lambert, Lynn Swann, and John Stallworth. In ways exhilarating and heartbreaking, they define not only the brotherhood of sports but those elements of the game that engage tens of millions of Americans: its artistry and its brutality. Drawing on hundreds of interviews, > is a richly textured story of a team and a sport, what the game gave these men, and what the game took. It gave fame, wealth, and, above all, a brotherhood of players, twelve of whom died before turning sixty. To a man, they said theyâ€™d do it again, all of it. They bared the soul of the game to Gary Pomerantz, and he captured it wondrously. • Here is a book as hard-hitting and powerful as the â€™Steel Curtainâ€™ dynasty that Pomerantz depicts so deftly. Itâ€™s the NFLâ€™s version of *The Boys of Summer*, with equal parts triumph and melancholy. Pomerantzâ€™s writing is strong, straightforward, funny, sentimental, and blunt. Itâ€™s as working class and gritty as the men he writes aboutâ€™ (>, *Top 10 Sports Books of 2013*).

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Customer Reviews

Let me begin by noting that i cannot be objective in reviewing this book: I grew up in Pittsburgh.

Done with college in the fall of 1972 and awaiting word from the draft board, I joined my best friend, Lee Lazar, as we stood outside the relatively new Three Rivers Stadium in the freezing cold from 11 p.m. until 6 a.m. to buy tickets to the Steelers' first playoff games in our lifetimes. I was there in Three Rivers, watching Ken Stabler bring 50,000 fans to a dead quiet with a broken play scramble to give the Raiders the lead 7-6 with 73 seconds to play. My heart sunk further as Bradshaw's pass to Frenchy Fuqua was broken up by Jack Tatum. Then, thinking the game was over, I heard a roar and from high up in the endzone behind Bradshaw, looked up to see Franco Harris running into the far endzone. I had no idea what had happened; how Franco had gotten the ball. When the scoreboard announced the score of 12-7, the delirium amid the confusion was one of the most wondrous experiences of my life. Two years later, in the fall of 1974, I had moved to San Francisco. When Oakland beat Miami in the famous sea-of-hands game, it meant that the Steelers would be playing across the Bay from my new home for the AFC Championship. I took the new BART train under the Bay and stood in line in much nicer weather than two years earlier to buy a ticket for the next weekend's game. And there in the Oakland Coliseum -- treated extremely graciously by the Oakland fans (truly) -- I sat in my Steelers hat and watched them win their first AFC Championship game. I've read that a third of the women in Pittsburgh consider themselves Steelers fans and that fraction is twice as large as that of Green Bay, the NFL city with the next largest fraction of female fans.

The 1970s Pittsburgh Steelers won four Super Bowls in six years. San Francisco 49ers coach Bill Walsh called them "the greatest team ever." And, there's certainly a lot of evidence to back that up. Nine players, including Coach Chuck Noll and two of the Rooneys (Art Sr. and Dan) were inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame. When the NFL's 75th anniversary team was announced, it featured five players from the 1970s Steelers, more than any other dynasty. Author Gary Pomerantz writes that with free agency and salary cap, there will never be another team like the 1970s Steelers. The names roll over any die-hard football fan's tongue--Mean Joe Greene, Franco Harris, Terry Bradshaw, Lynn Swann, Jack Lambert, John Stallworth, Mike Webster and the Steel Curtain (Greene, L.C. Greenwood, Dwight White and Ernie Holmes). As a young journalist, Pomerantz wrote about the 1970s Steelers. Now, 30 years later he revisits them and their legacy. The book's title "Their Life's Work" comes from Coach Chuck Noll's belief that all football players eventually had to get on to their life's work. He preached that playing football was not anyone's life's work. Sometimes, players had to start to pursue their life's work sooner than they anticipated. Dwight White said, "The ultimate test is not making the playoffs, but to be something after

football."Pomerantz recounts how the Steelers built a dynasty after going 35 years without a playoff win. In 1969, the first year under Coach Chuck Noll, the Steelers went 1-13. But that year, they drafted Mean Joe Greene, "the most important player we ever drafted, according to Art Rooney Jr. In 1970, they drafted Terry Bradshaw and in 1971, the Steelers drafted seven future starters. The team ended its playoff drought in 1972.

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