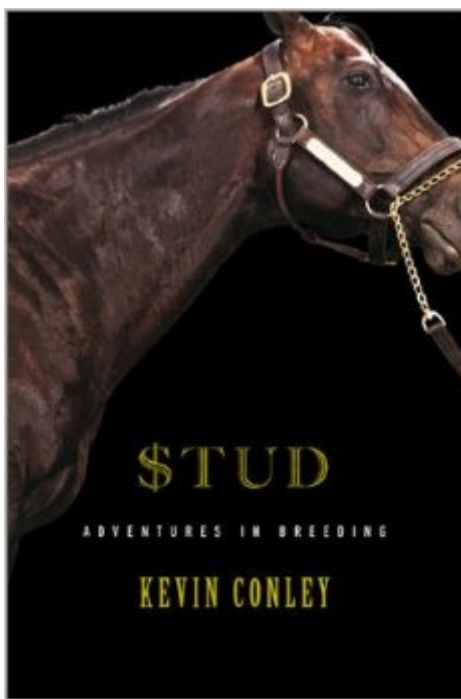


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Stud: Adventures In Breeding



Synopsis

The most expensive thirty seconds in sports. Every year, on Valentine's Day, the great Thoroughbred farms open their breeding sheds and begin their primary business. For the next one hundred and fifty days, the cries of stallions and the vigorous encouragement of their handlers echo through breeding country, from the gentle hills of Kentucky to the rich valleys of California. First appearing as an article in *The New Yorker*, *Stud* takes you into this strange and seductive world. We move from Lexington's Overbrook Farm, where the world's leading sire, Storm Cat, a lightly raced eighteen-year-old, brings in around thirty million dollars a year; to the auction halls, where sheiks and bookies (known more casually as the Doobie Brothers and the Boys) bid millions for Storm Cat's well-bred offspring. We visit Three Chimneys, where the twenty-seven-year-old Triple Crown winner Seattle Slew, a senior citizen by equine standards, makes a rousing return to active duty after spinal surgery, and stroll through Running Horse Farm, on the banks of the Rio Grande, where a nearly unmanageable colt, Devil Begone, has found peace and prosperity servicing desert mares like Patty O'Furniture. Cheap stud, top stud, old stud, wild stud, from the Hall of Fame horse to the harem stallion with his feral herd, *Stud* looks at intimate acts in idyllic settings (and the billion-dollar business behind them), providing a voyeuristic glimpse of just how human the equine world can be.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The text on the back cover of this book says it all: "The most expensive thirty seconds in sports."

You will need a lot of pocket change plus a very good mare before you book a cover from Storm Cat, the Thoroughbred stallion with the world's most expensive stud fee---\$500,000 per mare as of 2002. And there's no 'payable when the foal stands and nurses' clause in his contract, either."Stud" is a two-year labor of love by "New Yorker" staff writer, Kevin Conley who became intrigued by the amount of money that a Thoroughbred stallion could earn after retiring from the racetrack. This is an exuberant, stylishly-written book that will tell you everything you wanted to know about what goes on in the breeding shed, but were afraid to ask. I also learned some things I didn't know I wanted to know, like the diameter of Seattle Slew's testicles---this is a book for horse-lovers who have already been through sex education class. The author spends some time at the Keeneland sales in Lexington, Kentucky, where the 'Doobie Brothers' (four sheiks from the royal family of Dubai) duke it out with the 'boys' (Ireland's Coolmore Stud) for the most expensive yearlings in the sale (often Storm Cat progeny). Conley doesn't neglect the smaller breeders who make a profit by buying and breeding inexpensive mares with good blood-lines, and then selling their yearlings and two-year-olds for a profit. (There is a story in last week's "Thoroughbred Times" about a filly "who clearly did not have enough pedigree to shoot for the stars," yet was sold for \$1.9 million at Barretts March sale because she showed that she could run.) Finally, Conley details the differences between a 'natural' cover (Thoroughbreds), artificial insemination (A.I.

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